

table with citizens who care enough about their country that they would take time out of their private lives and present me with this comprehensive view.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:25 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Statement on the Situation in Lebanon *January 29, 2007*

I am deeply disappointed by the recent violence and bloodshed on the streets of Lebanon. It is all the more troubling that the violence occurred while Lebanon's legitimate leaders and friends were gathered together in Paris to help secure a peaceful and prosperous future for the country. Lebanon's friends have pledged a total of \$7.6 billion at the International Conference on Support for Lebanon. I will ask Congress for \$770 million to contribute to this cause. With this pledge, total U.S. support for Lebanon since last summer's conflict, including the \$230 million pledged at the Stockholm Conference last August, will equal approximately \$1 billion. This is a strong symbol of the American people's support for and commitment to the future of Lebanon.

All those who seek a peaceful, constitutional solution to the crisis in Lebanon de-

serve the support of the international community, but those responsible for creating chaos must be called to account. While Lebanon's friends seek to help the Lebanese Government build a free, sovereign, and prosperous country, Syria, Iran, and Hizballah are working to destabilize Lebanese society. Their goals are clear: They foment violence in order to prevent the establishment of a special tribunal in response to former Prime Minister Hariri's assassination, to prevent full implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions calling for Hizballah's disarmament, and to bring down Lebanon's democratically elected Government, in violation of its Constitution. The United States will continue to support Lebanon's Government as it seeks a peaceful and prosperous future for all the people of Lebanon.

Remarks Following Breakfast With Small-Business Leaders in Peoria, Illinois *January 30, 2007*

I'm here in Peoria for a couple of reasons. One, I'm looking forward to going to a great American company, Caterpillar, and talking about the importance of opening up markets for U.S. products, because when Caterpillar sells its products overseas, it helps people find work here in Peoria. But equally importantly, I'm here with

some business entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs.

Here are my impressions: One, the business sector—small-business sector—of the heartland is strong. And it's really strong because of low taxes. But it's also strong because of—the entrepreneurial spirit is

strong. You can't have a good business unless you have somebody willing to lead that business.

Secondly, I am very impressed by the civic spirit of the people here. People understand that when you live in a community, you have an obligation to help that community realize its full potential. I'm real proud of the reverend, who has taken a tough neighborhood here in Peoria and helped revitalize that neighborhood by utilizing his skills, his talent, and a power higher than himself.

The Congressman told me that when I came back to Peoria, I'd find a community that's vibrant and strong and optimistic, and

people around this table are vibrant and strong and optimistic. And I can't thank you enough for sharing your concerns, talking about your hopes. And I can't thank you enough for working hard to really make America the great country that it is.

So God bless, and thanks for your time.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:12 a.m. at the Sterling Family Restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Timothy E. Criss, pastor, City of Refuge Worship Center, Peoria, IL. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks on the National Economy in East Peoria, Illinois *January 30, 2007*

Thank you all. Thanks for letting me come by. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's good to be in the heartland of America. Thanks for coming to let me visit with you a little bit about our economy. I really want to thank the good folks at Caterpillar for letting me come by. I like it when they say, "Team Caterpillar." That's a good sign. It means people are working together for the common good.

You know, people from Texas like to say, things are better in Texas. Well, when you tour the Cat plant here, it's—I'm having second thoughts about if things are better in Texas. [*Laughter*] I'm impressed by the machinery I have seen. More importantly, I'm impressed by the workers I have met who are putting the machines together. I thank them for—[*applause*]. And I'm impressed by a culture of excellence and accomplishment that is the spirit of Caterpillar. I also appreciated the chance to drive a D-10. If you've never driven a D-10—[*laughter*—it's a cool experience. [*Laughter*]

I'm going to go to New York City tomorrow to deliver a speech on the state of the economy, but I really want to spend a little time here in Peoria to see how things are going. I was at Sterling Brothers—Sterling Family Restaurant today—Sterling Brothers?—Sterling Family, yes, run by two brothers—and met with some small-business owners, social entrepreneurs, as well as business entrepreneurs. I wasn't surprised by what I heard. It reminded me about the greatness of America. I heard about people willing to work hard to achieve dreams and people realizing that when they achieve dreams, they have an obligation to help others. It seems like to me the community spirit here in Peoria, Illinois, is strong.

And that's the way our economy is as well. It's a strong economy. And the fundamental question is, what are we going to do to keep it strong? It's one thing to say, today's economy is strong. I say it because inflation is down, interest rates are down, wages are on the increase, unemployment rate nationally is low, people are working